

Department of Veterans Affairs

§ 17.630

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT AND ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY PROFESSIONAL SCHOL- ARSHIP PROGRAM

SOURCE: Sections 17.625 through 17.636 appear at 78 FR 51071, Aug. 20, 2013, unless otherwise noted.

§ 17.625 Purpose.

The purpose of §§ 17.625 through 17.636 is to establish the requirements for the award of scholarships under the Visual Impairment and Orientation and Mobility Professional Scholarship Program (VIOMPSP) to students pursuing a program of study leading to a degree in visual impairment or orientation and mobility. The scholarship is designed to increase the supply of qualified Blind Rehabilitation Specialists and Blind Rehabilitation Outpatient Specialists available to VA. The scholarship will be publicized throughout educational institutions in the United States, with an emphasis on disseminating information to such institutions with high numbers of Hispanic students and to historically black colleges and universities.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7501)

§ 17.626 Definitions.

For the definitions that apply to §§ 17.625 through 17.636, see § 17.601.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501)

§ 17.627 Eligibility for the VIOMPSP.

(a) *General.* To be eligible for the VIOMPSP, an applicant must meet the following requirements:

(1) Be unconditionally accepted for enrollment or currently enrolled in a program of study leading to a degree in orientation and mobility, low vision therapy, or vision rehabilitation therapy, or a dual degree (a program in which an individual becomes certified in two of the three professional certifications offered by the Academy for Certification of Visual Rehabilitation and Education Professionals) at an accredited educational institution that is in a State;

(2) Be a citizen of the United States; and

(3) Submit an application to participate in the VIOMPSP, as described in § 17.629.

(b) *Obligated service to another entity.*

Any applicant who, at the time of application, owes a service obligation to any other entity to perform service after completion of the course of study is ineligible to receive a VIOMPSP scholarship.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7501(a), 7502(a), 7504(3))

§ 17.628 Availability of VIOMPSP scholarships.

VA will make awards under the VIOMPSP only when VA determines it is necessary to assist in alleviating shortages or anticipated shortages of personnel in visual impairment or orientation and mobility programs. VA's determination of the number of VIOMPSP scholarships to be awarded in a fiscal year, and the number that will be awarded to full-time and/or part-time students, is subject to the availability of appropriations.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7501(a), 7503(c)(2))

§ 17.629 Application for the VIOMPSP.

(a) *Application-general.* Each individual desiring a VIOMPSP scholarship must submit an accurate and complete application, including a signed written acceptance agreement.

(b) *VA's duties.* VA will notify applicants prior to acceptance in the VIOMPSP of the following information:

(1) A fair summary of the rights and liabilities of an individual whose application is approved by VA and whose acceptance agreement is consummated by VA; and

(2) Full description of the terms and conditions that apply to participation in the VIOMPSP and service in VA.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501(a), 7502(a)(2))

(The Office of Management and Budget has approved the information collection requirements in this section under control number 2900-0793.)

§ 17.630 Selection of VIOMPSP participants.

(a) *General.* In deciding which VIOMPSP applications to approve, VA will first consider applications submitted by applicants entering their final year of education or training. Applicants will be evaluated and selected